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AUTHOR Willis, David B.
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ABSTRACT

The growing interest in school cultures and multicultural education can be expected to generate an increasing interest in international schools and their roles in informing truly responsive multicultural/international education. Information about such schools is provided in this bibliographic essay, in which a review of literature examines the ethnographic, historical, and cross-cultural approaches. A trend in recent literature has been the shift from the concept of the international school as an American subculture in a foreign country to the school as a unique transcultural institution with a special ethos. The recommendation is made for the development of a research strategy that integrates disparate strands of focus into a conceptual framework. The essay is followed by an extensive reference list of doctoral dissertations on international schools, related topics, and Department of Defense schools, and a general bibliography. (219 references) (LMI)

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INTERNATIONAL AND OVERSEAS SCHOOLS:
A RESEARCH SYNTHESIS AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

by David B. Willis

Professor of Sociology and Anthropology

Soai University, Osaka, Japan

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As educators have become interested in the application of new models of evaluation and theory, the 'culture' of the school has become a legitimate subject of inquiry. Along with this has come an increased concern in many countries with multicultural education. As those of us in the field are only too aware, however, the attention of mainstream educators to international schools has been marginal at best.

Yet, even while ethnic differences and diversity are becoming more acute, the world is drawing closer together in space and time. We can thus expect more interest in international schools, with the experiences of these schools playing a special role, informing larger national educational systems of the possibilities of a truly responsive multicultural/ international education. This bibliographic essay is an initial step towards providing better information about such schools.

One of the reasons there is so little research on international schools is that until recently scholars have been content to picture them as extensions of national systems, as 'overseas schools.' In fact, they are something very different. The lack of information about what international schools actually do has led to some intriguing theorizing about what they are all about. Examples are Orr (1965, 1974), Bjork (1966), Ronsheim (1967), Leach (1969, 1974), Malinowski and Zorn (1973), Stoddart (1980), Dyal Chand (1980), Gellar (1981), Bennett (1982), McPherson (1982), Willis (1983), and Ambrogi (1984).

Three books that deal specifically with aspects of international schools are Leach's International Schools and Their Role in the Field of International Education (1967), Malinowski and Zorn's The U.N. International School: It's History and Development (1973), and Peterson's The International Baccalaureate: An Experiment in International Education (1972). Each is essentially an historical reconstruction. None of these books are based on material more recent than 1970.

Two journals appeared in the early 1980s, The International Schools Journal (1981-) and International Quarterly (1982-1988). Both of these publications showed an assertiveness of purpose and reflected an increased interest in the identity of the 'international school.'

Ethnography

An approach to educational systems that may be of help in studying international schools is found in educational ethnographies. Originating in the sociology and anthropology of schools, this approach has produced an extensive literature concerning student culture (Cusick, 1973), schooling as cultural transmission (Singleton, 1967; Cummings, 1980; Rohlen, 1983), school ethos (Rohlen, 1983; Rutter, et al., 1979), portraits of 'good' schools (Lightfoot, 1983), and examination of the differing perspectives of students, teachers, administrators, and parents (Lortie, 1975; Wolcott, 1973, 1977; Spindler, 1982). Reviews of the development of the field can be found in Eddy (1985) and Schensul (1985).

The primary authors whose work can be considered as informative for scholars of international schools are, by area: students: Cusick (1973); socialization: Geertz (1973, 1983), Bourdieu and Passeron (1977), and Turner (1967, 1974); and school ethos or culture: Cookson and Persell (1985), Lightfoot (1983), and Rohlen (1983).

Cusick (1973, pp. 208-209, 213-214) found a number of mutually reinforcing socio-cultural characteristics in the high school which he studied which combine "to create and define the environment in which the students construct their action." From these socio-cultural characteristics of the organization flow a number of intended and unintended consequences which are of interest in the study of international schools. These include matters of freedom, involvement, and interaction for participants.

Socialization in schools has been studied from a number of different perspectives. Gibson (1982) found in her ethnographic study of schooling in the Caribbean that students' performances were directly affected by the relationship between the cultural patterns which the school supported and those adhered to by the students: "Where there is congruence and compatibility between the two, the probability for success in school is enhanced." On the other hand, where discontinuity and incompatibility between cultural systems exists, there is a likelihood of problems.

Children from higher socioeconomic groups have been shown by educational sociologists to be provided with schooling in keeping with their statuses (see Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977; Bowles and Gintis, 1976; and Cookson and Persell, 1985), and scholars who have looked at the fit between parental orientations, expectations, and formal schooling have suggested that these have had a strong impact upon the destiny of the children of elites. Upper-class children are said to be socialized to task orientation, deferred gratification, and an acceptance of the legitimacy of the teacher's authority and the rewards offered by the school. These characteristics are supported in formal schooling and contribute to effective scholarship.

Educational ethnographers are another group of researchers who have conveyed the multiplicity of views and meanings found in the organizational setting of schools. In Kapferer's ethnography of private schools in Australia (1981), the community of private school parents was found to have achieved a far greater measure of control as fee-paying consumers over a school's policies and programs than parents of a state school, particularly in the area of socialization: "Such a degree of control is enhanced, and legitimated, by the cooperative, personal nature of relations between parents and teachers in private schools." (p. 258)

Ritual and ceremonial practice reflecting the stages of socialization were found by Kapferer to be highly developed in private schools, which she suggests is the result of 'consumer patronage.' As she stated, one of the most important features of private schools is to establish and maintain the commitment of the parental body to the stated goals of the school (p. 259). Similar findings emerged from Cookson and Persell's study of American private schools (1985).

Symbols are one of the vehicles of this commitment to socialization. They have been defined as forms of representation, both verbal and nonverbal, which carry meaning representative of ideas other than those that are directly represented in the symbolic form itself. As Turner (1967) has said, symbols are multivocal and potentially condense a variety of meanings. The meanings communicated through symbols depend upon the context of their use.

According to Turner (1974), rituals frequently occur at socially important and symbolic junctures, at points of division, conflict, and change. In his analysis, rituals gather into their form the potentially divisive properties of the social world from which they have emerged, forcing either a resolution or an organization of ideas and action that goes into new social directions. Rituals in international schools can be seen to function in this way. Geertz (1973, 1983) has further argued that

rituals are both "models of" and "models for" society, just as Durkheim posited them to be representations or idealizations of the society that produces them.

The drawing in of all concerned parties and securing their agreement to shared objectives and common goals is the substance of socialization. Besides ritual, this substance can be seen in ceremonies, extracurricular activities, positions of leadership and responsibility, school-wide events, and the prominent, widespread, and often compulsory use and display of symbols of solidarity. Educational ethnographers have portrayed educational institutions as repositories and as transmitters of the culture which rituals symbolize.

The metaphor of 'cultural capital' used by Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) to describe an individual's relative success in the educational system is particularly appropriate. Cultural capital is largely a function of the extent to which individuals have absorbed the dominant culture, or of how much 'cultural capital' they have received.

A useful concept in the study of international schools, 'cultural capital' explains how the members of an international school community accumulate their (phenomenal) collection of cross-cultural skills, languages, and symbols. These symbols can be associated with ideology, ethnic and group membership, and social status.

Lightfoot (1983) frames the ethnographic perspective for studying a school's ethos or culture in a discussion of her commitment to holistic, complex, contextual descriptions of reality. She believes that environments and processes should be examined from the outsider's more distant perspective and the insider's immediate, subjective view; and that the truth lies in the integration of various perspectives rather than in the choice of one as dominant and "objective."

In Rohlen's penetrating account of Japanese high schools (1983), the relationship between schooling, on the one hand, and the cultural orientation and social structure of a national culture, on the other, is examined. His central interest was to find out how various features of high school education epitomize Japanese culture.

International/Overseas Schools

Few of the studies that have been reviewed have been about 'international schools,' per se, although many concern what have been loosely called American-Sponsored Overseas Schools (ASOS). Much remains unpublished or has a decidedly American (and educational administrator) thrust, not surprising given the long-term support provided to this research theme by two university centers dedicated to the study of these schools (Michigan State University and the University of Alabama).

Since most of these American-Sponsored Overseas Schools now have an international student body (indeed, Americans are a minority in most schools today), the international school, rather than a search for the American features of schools abroad or anxieties about maladjusted American children, makes for a more appropriate research focus.

Much of the research on overseas schools does, however, contain relevant information for the subject of international schools (viz. Howard, 1983). For many institutions described as overseas schools an identity shift or transition has clearly taken place during the last twenty years as the enrollment of multinational clientele has increased. Not only has the clientele changed but the form and function have as well.

Two reviews of the literature about overseas schools have been written, an article by Orr (1974) and a dissertation integration by Howard (1983). Orr placed the research in the following categories: school setting, institutionalization, school organization and administration, school program, personnel, and pupils. He also identified the research by region and according to the methodology used: descriptive/historical, statistical, or prescriptive/theoretical.

Howard's integration of the literature covered the period from 1861 to 1982. Findings of her study were organized around (1) Research Issues, which she ranked from most to least frequently addressed (school personnel, school setting, student body, school programs, inter-institutional relationships, school administration, institutional foundations, school governance, and school clientele); (2) Research Strategy, which she identified as survey research (76%), case study (19%), historical study (8%), and experimental research (6%); (3) Quality, which was a rating of dissertations as marginal, adequate, good or excellent in which she rated the 89 dissertations reviewed as 'adequate'; and (4) Demographic Characteristics, which listed information about the authors, their universities, and the dissertation topics.

Howard found that the typical dissertation relied on the questionnaire as its data source, was analyzed using simple descriptive statistics, and represented an administrative viewpoint, and was usually written by a male with previous overseas experience for a Ph.D. or Ed.D. in educational administration at a public university in the early to mid-1970s.

Almost all of the studies of international or overseas schools have been oriented towards only one group of the international school population, the sojourner Americans who are typically in a country for less than five years. A useful study in this regard, at least for this part of the international school community, is Nash's anthropological study of an expatriate community in the Spanish city of Ciudad Condal (1970). His study represents the viewpoint of isolated sojourners and thus has implications for any study of cross-cultural interaction. The specific subject of sojourner parents in an overseas setting and how they relate to the school has been discussed by M. Brown (1982), Cullen (1983), Krajewski (1969), Larkins (1982), and McCarty (1983).

Cullen's study was of the effect of transnational experience on expatriate managers of multinational companies in Japan and their values. Cullen found that willingness to accept an overseas assignment was the most likely reason for being placed in a position overseas. The greatest changes in values were found to be during the first two years abroad, changes which were 'moderated by international experience in other foreign countries.' Cullen conjectures that this self-selection makes for a sample of people who are significantly different prior to going overseas. McCarty studied the wives of expatriate businessmen, many of whom had children who attended a local international school.

Although the experiences of overseas Americans are well-reported, the other members of international school communities (non-American sojourners, resident foreigners, and host nationals) are seldom mentioned in these studies, yet they now comprise the majority of students in most schools.

Data provided in the ISS Directory of Overseas Schools (1987) for American versus other possible student origins reveals this to be a standard demographic characteristic of most international schools. Given a listing of those with 'American School' in their title, schools with more than 50% American students are in a distinct minority (less than 6% of the schools listed). Of 235 schools reporting enrollments greater than 100 students in the directory named above, 190 had less than 50% Americans.

This is, of course, in great contrast to the situation of even fifteen years ago.

A 1983 study by Orr and Conlan (done privately and cited by Orr and Conlan, 1985a, p. 56) gives greater understanding of the role and nature of these nascent institutions. A particularly significant finding is that respondents in schools in all of the world's geographic regions tend to agree and to disagree on similar items. Overseas schools are said to improve, foster, and enhance international and cross-cultural understanding through curricula which provide binational opportunities, encourage mutual respect and understanding of both nationality and first language, promote the benefit of cross-cultural experience, enrich the national culture of students by learning about and being a part of a different culture, promote lasting friendships with others of many different nationalities, and foster tolerance of differences better than single-nationality, monolingual schools. In his research concerning parental expectations in an international school, Wills (1984, p.63) noted that, "It was surprising to find that the responses from this international community, while diverse, were more homogeneous than the responses from a typical American community." This finding speaks for a set of common socio-economic expectations which parents of international school students hold.

The historical background of international schools was provided by Leach in his general account of their development (1969). His and Ronsheim's (1966) works are the definitive statements on the formative history of international schools, particularly of the beginnings of the International Baccalaureate, of which Leach was a founder and driving force. About the same time that Leach's school in Geneva was beginning to become fully internationalized (the early 1950s), officials at the United Nations in New York decided that a school was needed for their children. The development of the United Nations International School, as portrayed by Malinowski and Zorn (1983), is a fascinating account of heated political battles fought over issues such as language of instruction, bilinguality, and the place of national values.

Also included in historical research are a number of case studies covering such disparate topics as bilingual schools in Mexico (Milman, 1984), the historical development of overseas schools in Zaire and Brazil (Miller, 1978; Beans, 1968), and aspects of an American academy in the Arabian desert (Weeks, 1982). The common strand that draws all of these studies together is the international setting, an exotic intercultural niche which those in international and overseas schools seem to take for granted.

In terms of theoretical approaches, Bjork's study (1965) portrayed how cross-cultural milieus affect schools and proposed that American school administration could benefit from such an examination. His research attempted to formulate certain theoretical models incorporating this approach in order to predict potential problems and conflicts in areas with a diverse population. He sees the school's purpose as being a stage for the interpretation of the elements of culture.

Another view of cross-cultural understanding in an international school community was provided by Stoddart (1980). The internationalism of the two Latin American schools that she studied was seldom actually evident. As she reported, the character of the schools was essentially American, "a suburban white-middle-class school transposed into a foreign setting with nationals from the host country entering what amounts to an American curricula with all its parochialism, strengths and weaknesses." Stoddart found the governing board and the faculty dominated by Americans. She decried the creation of "a cultural surrogate which is in many ways antithetical to a spirit of internationalism, with ...a curriculum and

instructional approach as much like an American school as possible: that is to say, with only a slight trace of international flavor" (pp. 202-203).

Kelly (1975) noticed that rather than promoting international understanding, schools can sometimes create strained relationships, particularly when the school buildings become "monuments to American affluence rather than centers of friendships." In addition, Kelly noted that "the history of American schools overseas is replete with problems that have created cross-cultural tensions that have had to be resolved at the Ambassadorial level" (p. 19), although he does not cite specific cases.

Studies of American students who attended international or overseas schools began to appear in the late 1960s. These reports focus on students in international schools from viewpoints other than those of the actors themselves. From the middle 1970s, some researchers attempted to characterize members of this student population with the term 'third-culture kids.' Through the use of this term these commentators have seemed to imply that these students are deficient, 'not whole,' 'incomplete,' and 'neither/nor,' when they are, in fact, representatives of an emerging transnational milieu.

Considerable literature has documented the problems of these third-culture kids (TCK's), a term not far removed from 'third wheel.' The concept originated with Useem (1963) as a label for children (originally adults in Useem's studies) who spent the majority of their schooling in a country other than the one of their citizenship. It was later used by Downs (1974), Downie (1976), and Hager (1978). TCK's never become a part of any culture according to these studies, neither the one they live in nor the one they are from. These authors, like the psychologist Werkman (1954, 1982, 1983), seem to have had more of an interest in the problems than in the promise of their subjects. Yet what is being witnessed in international schools and other contexts where multi-cultural socialization takes place may be a transformation of human beings, a transformation with very interesting, even profound dimensions.

The first ethnography of an international school, focusing on the students' culture, was that by Willis (1986), who sought to discover how features of an international school education might reflect an emerging transnational culture. Although there have been many ethnographic studies in education, none have addressed socialization as an issue which takes place in a transcultural or an international setting. This is the first study of what actually happens in an international school, of the actual culture of an international school and its students.

Stoddart (1980, p. 195), too, noticed "the relative insignificance of nationality as a force in determining people's thinking on many subjects, attitudes toward the country and school, or attitudes toward other school participants." In wide-ranging surveys of the goals and philosophy statements of international schools, Conlan (1982, pp. 5-8) found that the schools view their purpose as 'promoting, fostering, and maintaining cross-cultural understandings and experiences' for their students. A similar review which the author conducted in 1981-1983 of statements received from a large number of international and overseas schools (reported in Willis, 1986) confirmed these findings. To what extent schools actually follow these goals is of course open to question.

A review by Droppert (1984) defines international schools as non-profit making organizations with a multicultural student body and a curriculum that attempts to meet the educational, social, and cultural needs of this multicultural student body. In this context the expectations of parents are especially noted (Wills, 1984; Malinowski and Zorn, 1973), for by the very diversity of these expectations is seen a setting that is clearly not American. Those who have studied overseas schools have simply

assumed that they were American, often without examining what was actually happening 'on-the-ground.'

Becker and Mehlinger suggested (1968) that the world's population can be perceived as organized into horizontal layers of transnational elites as well as into vertical national units. They classified these elites as social, business, intellectual, and political. These transnational elites have regular communication and interaction among themselves, an interaction that may greatly exceed the intensity of contacts and degree of communication between them and non-elite groups within their own countries.

Many of the people who are a part of the social fabric of international schools fall within these categories. There is an implicit encouragement of an international world-view in this context through recognition of the lessons multiple cultural perceptions embody. This has been described as 'worldmindedness' (Dyal Chand, 1980, pp. 8-12), a situation in which individuals have multiple, transnational loyalties.

As Fox (1985, p. 53) has stated, "At a time when the interest of governments in multicultural and global education is widespread and permeated with a sense of urgency, the little known experience of international schools merits review." One of the most important projects to have emerged from this experience is the creation and development of the International Baccalaureate (IB) program, which has recently aroused the interest of many schools in North America. International schools have made what Fox calls grassroots contributions to the development of the IB, "which, in turn, has had a marked influence on their goals, policies, and curricula."

The International Baccalaureate has been investigated by Peterson (1972, 1977), Leach (1969), Blackburn (1983, 1984), Wagner (1978), Crouch (1979), Hayot (1984), and others. Running through the history of the IB have been three important concepts: service, national academic reform, and scholarship (Goodman, 1985, p. 9). Many who support the IB feel that the original aim of service to internationally mobile children should be maintained as central. Along with this should be careful attention to governmental and university recognition of the IB credential as adequate for university entrance. A dilemma in this context is that of the over 300 schools which participate in the IB program, about one-half are public schools in North America. These are national rather than international schools. Many are magnet schools. They may be another indication of the demand from the transnational elite for international schooling for their children.

Problems regarding English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) in the international school have generated a literature concerned with the place of this world language. Studies include Orr and Conlan (1982), and Russell (1973). Related language issues have been examined by Anderson (1974), Fraser (1970), Milman (1984), and Rainey (1971). Goodman (1981, p.155) has noted that

> Our own experience at the Washington International School has been that, with rare exceptions, the child's first language is actually enhanced by early exposure to a second. We have also noted the greater ease with which a "bilingual" child approaches a third language at a later stage of schooling as compared with a monolingual child beginning after puberty a second language (that is, a first foreign one). Moreover, our experience confirms Penfield's conviction that acquiring new languages enhances the general intellectual ability of children.

As Brown (1984) has noted, the majority of the students at any international school are bilinguals or emerging bilinguals. The internationalization of staff was indicated in an International Quarterly editorial (June 1985, pp. 3-4) which noted that with more people electing to stay abroad an entirely new breed of educator has emerged: the professional overseas educator. Earlier, a well-organized employment guide for overseas educators appeared (Anthony and Roe, 1984). Another sign of the emerging solidarity of international schools is the existence of a number of organizations and regional groupings which have stengthened inservice programs for both teachers and administrators (Cockrell, 1978).

These include: AAIE: Association for the Advancement of International Education (an organization for chief school administrators which acts as a job clearing agency for administrators through its annual conference as well as its trade paper, Inter Ed); AASCA: Association of American Schools in Central America; AASSA: Association of American Schools in South America; ACCAS: Association of Colombian and Caribbean American Schools; AISA: Association of International Schools in Africa; A/OS: Office of Overseas Schools (formerly ASOS), part of the U.S. State Department; ASOMEX: Association of American Schools in Mexico; EARCOS: East Asia Regional council of Overseas Schools; ECIS: European Council of International Schools; ISA: International Schools Association; ISS: International Schools Services (which also has annual recruiting fairs, though more for staff than administrators, as well as a trade paper called News Links); MAIS: Mediterrranean Association of International Schools; NE/SA: Near East/South Asia Council of Overseas Schools; and JCIS (Japan Conference of International Schools, originally JCOS: Japan Council of Overseas Schools, when the name was changed to reflect shifting realities).

Two studies were ostensibly carried out from the views of school participants (Hager, 1978, and Wright, 1979), but these were by administrators and only partly conducted through participant-observation. Hager's case study of third culture children was conducted in the American School of the Hague where he had been principal of the middle school for six years. He considered his study to be participant-observation of the values, attitudes, and norms of the individuals there, but an administrative bias was revealed in his choice of 'basic school components' that made up the study: sponsoring employer, host and third culture 'institutions,' the 'central operating forces of the school,' the teachers, and the middle school. The perceptions of the central actors, the students, were limited.

Wright participated in the daily school activities of four selected schools in the Far East for ten weeks, studying the interactions of American, host-country, and third-country youth, but his view was limited by the brief period of time in the field and can essentially be considered to be that of a non-participant observer. The many studies that have been done like these present only limited representations of the school. The narrow scope they present tells us much about particular concerns but little, if anything, about the larger picture of these schools. Neither Wright nor Hager, for example, carefully explored cultural or environmental factors in the school community.

As Stoddart (1980) concluded, what is lacking in the literature is an understanding of the total environment in which an international/overseas school operates. Participation in an international school community not only provides important information about the member's choice of activities but also the more significant information about their attitudes, opinions, ideas, and the values that inform their choices, their opportunities, and their hopes.

Although the literature concerning international schools is sparse, strands have begun to appear that indicate a unique institution and a special ethos. What is now called for is a research strategy which brings some of these many disparate strands together in a solid conceptual fabric illuminating an international school and the transcultural society which it serves.

Why Study International Schools?

What happens in an international school is of interest because they reflect a valuable alternative form of education. As Ernest Boyer said in an interview with International Quarterly (1985, p. 3):

> I feel strongly that education at all levels, not just schools, has to come to terms with what I call the human community. If we do not see the points at which our destinies are intertwined, then I think the future is grim. Certainly we rejoice in our differences, but we must find ways to transcend them... In an international school the potential for this is truly outstanding.

Explorations of this potential will be an increasing feature of educational research in the 1990s. One of the most useful products of this expanding research base will be insights for national school settings with multiple constituencies. A wide range of studies of overseas schools has provided valuable, if fragmentary, evidence of what happens in these schools. What follows is an attempt to bring the experiences of these schools to a wider audience of interested educators by providing an up-to-date summary of research.

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